

Luke 2:1-52 **Birth and Circumcision and Childhood of Jesus**

Time and occasion at Birth of Jesus

¹ And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

Events surrounding Birth of Jesus

³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Witnesses at Birth of Jesus

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Message spread about Birth of Jesus

¹⁵ So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Circumcision of Jesus

²¹ And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

Presentation in the Temple

²² Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Prophecy of Simeon

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation
31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel."

33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Prophecy of Anna

36 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; 37 and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

Return to Nazareth and Childhood of Jesus

39 So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. 40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

41 His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42 And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. 43 When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; 44 but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. 45 So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. 46 Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. 48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." 49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" 50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Time and occasion at Birth of Jesus

- ✚ The time was when Augustus was Caesar of Rome, when he sent Quirinius to take control over Syria and the land of Israel was under his dominion. This is described in the works of Josephus, book of Antiquities of the Jews, end of book 17 and first of book 18. Thus it was a historical time that can be verified. [\[Luke 2:1-2\]](#)
- ✚ It was also during the time when Herod was king of Judea. [\[Matthew 2:1\]](#)
 - ✧ Herod was the son of Antipater and Cypros an Idumean appointed to the post by Caesar, first introduced in the works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 7.
 - ✧ He was offered the title of king of the Jews by Cassius and Murcus according to the works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 14, chapter 11.
 - ✧ Herod defeated Antigonus and took the kingdom for himself according to the decree of the Senate in Rome, according to the works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 14, chapter 16.

God inspired Events surrounding Birth of Jesus and Witnesses to the fact

- ✚ Everyone was required to go to his own city to register for taxes, according to a decree from Caesar Augustus. [\[Luke 2:1-3\]](#)
- ✚ Joseph and Mary came from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea, the City of David, because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David. [\[Luke 2:4-5\]](#)
 - ✧ Mary was great with child, at the time of delivery, she was still a virgin and called betrothed wife because they had not yet consummated their marriage. [\[Matthew 1:24-25\]](#)
 - ✧ They were required to travel at this time because of the decree from Caesar. [\[Luke 2:1-3\]](#)
- ✚ While they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. [\[Luke 2:6-7\]](#)

- ✚ Consider the dynamics of this story:
 - ✧ We know that God can and did speak directly to Joseph when He wanted to do so. [\[Matthew 1:20, 2:13, 20\]](#)
 - ✧ We also know that when God spoke to Joseph, Joseph did what he was instructed to do. [\[Matthew 1:24-25, 2:14-15, 2:21-23\]](#)

 - ✧ So the dynamics of the story are revealed in what God is doing behind the scene:
 - ✧ If it was only necessary for the child to be born in Bethlehem Judea to fulfill prophecy according to Micah 5:2, God could have very easily said to Joseph, "Arise, take Mary to Bethlehem of Judea for the child must be born there." Joseph would have packed up and taken Mary to Bethlehem, it was his home town, he could have stayed with relatives or friends, and certainly there would have been shelter in the inn.
 - ✧ But God did not do it that way. God went to Rome and inspired Caesar Augustus to require everyone to travel to his home town to register for taxation.
 - ✧ Now, with the decree from Caesar, everyone is traveling to their home towns to register. So by the time Joseph and Mary have packed and traveled from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea, all the homes of relatives and friends are full of travelers, the Inn is also full to capacity, there is no place to find shelter except in a stable.
 - ✧ The question is "Why" and the answer is easy to discover. Lambs are not born in homes, in palaces, or in Inns, but rather, lambs are born either in the open field or in a stable. This child being born is "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." [\[John 1:29\]](#)

- ✧ God was painting a picture of His great mercy toward mankind, when He sent His Son to be the Lamb in the manger in Bethlehem that night. [Luke 2:6-7]
- ✧ When a lamb is born, the people in houses are not aware of it, nor is the Inn keeper, nor the king on the throne, but shepherds are the first to know of the birth of a lamb. And so it was when The Lamb of God was born, the first to know were the shepherds who heard the glad tidings from the angels out on the hillside. [Luke 2:8-14]
- ✧ It was the shepherds beside the mother and father who were first to witness the birth of the Lamb of God. [Luke 2:15-16]
- ✧ It was the shepherds who went to town and proclaimed widely what they had seen and heard, that the Lamb of God was born in a stable in Bethlehem. [Luke 2:17-18]
- ✧ Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. [Luke 2:19]
- ✧ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. [Luke 2:20]

Angels appear to shepherds with Divine message

- ✧ The appearance of the Angel and Heavenly host.:
 - ✧ The Greek word **angelos** is translated angel and bears the definition of: "a messenger, envoy, one who is sent."
 - ✧ So we have the appearance of one who is sent accompanied by the **Glory of God**.
 - ✧ The message to the shepherds identifying the baby in the Hebrew language was, "For there is born to you this day in the city of David, **Mowshiya** (a Savior) who is Ha'MASHIACH YAHWEH (Christ the Lord)."
 ✧ In other words, the angel identified Jesus as Messiah Jehovah.
 - ✧ After the angel delivered his message to the shepherds, he was suddenly accompanied by a **multitude of the Heavenly Hosts** (angels) praising God.
 - ✧ When the angels departed from the shepherds, they **ascended into Heaven**.
 - ✧ Clearly these messengers were not human but heavenly.
- ✧ The message to the shepherds reveals:
 - ✧ The Glad Tidings is not for Israel only, but for **all people**.
 - ✧ The Child being born is **Savior, Christ** (Messiah – God's Anointed One), and Jehovah (**Lord**).
 - ✧ The coming of the Savior is God's expression of His offering of **Peace and Good Will** toward mankind.
 - ✧ This Gift from God merits praise as expressed in the words of the angels, "**Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**"
 - ✧ The praise is focused on God in Heaven and His offer of Peace and Good Will toward men.

Circumcision of Jesus

- ✧ When eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. [Luke 2:21]
- ✧ The eighth day circumcision was in keeping with the command of God to Abraham when the Covenant of Circumcision had been established. [Genesis 17:9-13, Leviticus 12:4]

Presentation in the Temple

- ✧ Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." [Luke 2:22-24]

- ✧ The time for purification after the birth of a male child is counted after the eighth day on which the child is circumcised, and she shall count thirty three days for her purification. [\[Leviticus 12:1-4\]](#)
- ✧ When the days of purification are completed the mother is to bring a Burnt Offering and a Sin Offering to the priest who will make atonement for her and she shall be clean. [\[Leviticus 12:6-8\]](#)

Prophecy of Simeon [\[Luke 2:25-35\]](#)

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was **Simeon**, and this man was **just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel**, and the **Holy Spirit** was upon him. 26 **And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.** 27 So he came **by the Spirit** into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

29 **"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word;**
 30 **For my eyes have seen Your salvation**
 31 **Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,**
 32 **A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,**
And the glory of Your people Israel."

33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, **"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."**

- ✧ Jesus is the One Who will bring Consolation (comfort) to Israel. This will be finally realized when He returns and sets up His Kingdom and reigns over the entire earth for a thousand years. [\[Revelation 20:4\]](#)
- ✧ His first coming was set for the Salvation of all peoples.
- ✧ He opened the door of revelation to the Gentiles.
- ✧ As King of kings and Lord of lords, in His Kingdom, He will be the Glory of Israel.

Prophecy of Anna [\[Luke 2:36-38\]](#)

36 Now there was one, **Anna, a prophetess**, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; 37 and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And coming in that instant **she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.**

- ✧ From the time Anna was married to the time she saw Jesus, was 91 years. Her age at marriage is not recorded. She certainly was of a great age, most likely over 100.
- ✧ It was after this time of purification that the Wise Men came and found them in a house. [\[Matthew 2:1-12\]](#)
- ✧ Then they fled to Egypt at the instruction of the angel. [\[Matthew 2:13-15\]](#)
- ✧ From Egypt they returned to Nazareth after the death of Herod. [\[Matthew 2:19-23\]](#)
- ✧ Luke missed the trip to Egypt, but he picked up on the childhood of Jesus in Nazareth. [\[Luke 2:39-40\]](#)

Return to Nazareth and Childhood of Jesus

So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became **strong in spirit**, filled with **wisdom**; and the **grace of God** was upon Him. [\[Luke 2:39-40\]](#)

- ✚ Jesus as a child was known to be:
 - ✧ Strong in Spirit.
 - ✧ Filled with Wisdom.
 - ✧ The Grace of God was upon Him.

✧ Everyone could tell that Jesus was a special child by the fruit of His life as a child.

Jesus at age 12 in the Temple and home in Nazareth [\[Luke 2:41-50\]](#)

- ✚ At age 12, Jesus displayed that special quality in the Temple and in Nazareth. [\[Luke 2:41-52\]](#)
- ✚ The parents custom was to go to Jerusalem every year for the Feast of Passover.
- ✚ When Jesus was age twelve, he lingered in Jerusalem when His parents started home after the feast.
- ✚ After searching for Him at the first encampment on their way home, Jesus was missing and the parents returned to Jerusalem still searching for Him.
- ✚ After three days they found Jesus in the Temple astonishing the teachers with His understanding and answers.
- ✚ When Mary His mother expressed her concern at His absence from the family and their search for Him, Jesus demonstrated His keen awareness of His purpose on this earth as He said, **"Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"**
 - ✧ Jesus knew His Father was not Joseph, but God Most High.
 - ✧ Jesus knew of His intended role as Savior of the world and presenting the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven.
- ✚ Yet being God in the flesh, Jesus learned obedience even toward His earthly parents.
 - ✧ Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and **was subject to them**, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. [\[Luke 2:51\]](#)
 - ✧ And Jesus increased in **wisdom** and **stature**, and in **favor with God and men**. [\[Luke 2:52\]](#)